

IN THE CLAIMS:

A complete listing of the claims and their status as of this Amendment is as follows:

Claims 1 through 14 (Cancelled)

15.(Currently amended) A screw connection for at least two hinge parts, comprising a screw configured for interconnecting the at least two hinge parts, wherein the hinge parts engage one inside the other and have an upper hinge lobe, a lower hinge lobe, and at least one middle hinge lobe, said screw having a screw head and a screw shank that extends through a first through opening in the upper hinge lobe and extends through a second through opening in the middle hinge lobe, with a thread permitting the screw shank to be screwed into the lower hinge lobe, and comprising a sleeve that surrounds the screw shank, has elastic properties, and interacts with the upper and middle hinge lobes when the screw is in a screwed-in state, whereby the diameter of the second through opening is less than or equal to the diameter of the first through opening, and the screw has at least one bearing surface for contacting the sleeve with at least one engaging surface that is aligned in the direction of movement in which the screw is unscrewed, the improvement comprising:

the screw shank having an annular collar that, in the screwed-in state is situated in the middle hinge lobe, said annular collar providing said at least one engaging surface to retain and support said sleeve thereagainst when said screw shank and sleeve are removed from said middle lobe, and wherein the annular collar acts as a guide collar for insertion of said screw into said second through opening in said middle lobe.

16.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 15, wherein the screw shank is provided with at least one annular groove.

17.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 16, wherein the sleeve engages a longitudinal section.

18.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 15, wherein the screw shank has at least one bridge.

19.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 18, wherein the bridge has a circumferential perimeter and is at least partially enclosed by the sleeve.

Claim 20 (Cancelled)

21.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the sleeve, when viewed crosswise to the longitudinal extension of the screw, is disposed so as to project at least partially over the annular collar.

22.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the diameter of the screw shank in the region of the annular groove is less than the diameter of the second through opening.

23.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein in the circumferential surface of the first through opening is provided at least one longitudinal groove, running parallel or essentially parallel to the direction of movement in which the screw is screwed and unscrewed for protecting the sleeve from twisting.

24.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 23, wherein at least two longitudinal grooves of preferably the same size are introduced in the circumferential surface of the first through opening, and further wherein wall segments are provided in the circumferential surface situated between the longitudinal grooves and preferably are essentially the same size as the longitudinal grooves.

25.(Previously presented) The screw connection according the claim 15 wherein the sleeve on its end opposite from the annular collar is constructed to be supported directly on the underside of the screw head or on a cylindrical projection extending from the underside of the screw head.

26.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 25, wherein the diameter of the screw head or the diameter of the cylindrical projection is less than the diameter of the first through opening.

27.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the sleeve in the screwed-in state is deformed in such a way that the sleeve material is pressed into an annular space formed between the screw shank and the second through opening.

28.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 27, further comprising a cylindrical projection extending from the underside of the screw head and wherein the sleeve material is pressed into a gap formed between the screw head and the cylindrical projection and the first through opening.

29.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 27, further comprising at least one longitudinal groove and wherein the sleeve material is pressed into said at least one longitudinal groove.

30.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the sleeve has an annular-shaped cross section, and at the end thereof facing toward the screw head has a section that conically tapers in the direction of the thread.

31.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the sleeve on its end facing toward the thread is provided with at least one recess for accepting a

wall segment formed in the circumferential wall of said first through opening.

32.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 15, wherein the second through opening has an annular-shaped cross section.

Claim 33 (Cancelled)

34.(Currently amended) A screw connection for at least two hinge parts, comprising:

at least two hinge parts which engage one inside the other and ~~have~~ comprise an upper hinge lobe with a first through opening the circumferential surface of which has at least one longitudinal groove, a lower hinge lobe, and at least one middle hinge lobe having a second through opening, each of the through openings having a diameter and the diameter of the second through opening being less than or equal to the diameter of the first through opening;

a screw configured for interconnecting the at least two hinge parts, said screw having a screw head and a screw shank that extends through the first through opening in the upper hinge lobe and extends through the second through opening in the middle hinge lobe, with a thread permitting the screw shank to be screwed into the lower hinge lobe, the screw having a screwed in state, and the screw having at least one bearing surface and an annular collar with at least one engaging surface that is aligned in the direction of movement in which the screw is unscrewed, the annular collar, when in the screwed-in state, being situated in the second through opening of the middle hinge lobe, thereby providing a guide member for insertion of said screw into said second through opening; and

a sleeve with elastic properties that surrounds the screw shank and is engaged and supported by said at least one engaging surface of said annular collar, said sleeve being positioned to interact with the upper and middle hinge lobes when the screw is in the screwed-in state, and is protected from twisting by said longitudinal groove in said

first opening, which longitudinal groove runs essentially parallel to the direction of movement of said screw.

35.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 34, wherein the screw shank is provided with at least one annular groove.

Claim 36 (Cancelled)

37.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 34, wherein the screw shank has at least one bridge.

38.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 37, wherein the bridge has a circumferential perimeter and is at least partially enclosed by the sleeve.

39.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 34, wherein the annular collar acts as a guide collar for insertion of said screw into said second through opening in said middle lobe.

40.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 34, wherein said sleeve, when viewed crosswise to the longitudinal extension of the screw, is disposed so as to project at least partially over the annular collar.

41.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 35, wherein the diameter of the screw shank in the region of the annular groove is less than the diameter of the second through opening.

Claim 42 (Cancelled)

43.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to Claim 42, wherein at least

two longitudinal grooves of preferably the same size are introduced in the circumferential surface of the first through opening, and further wherein wall segments are formed in the circumferential surface situated between the longitudinal grooves and preferably are essentially the same size as the longitudinal grooves.

44.(Currently amended) The screw connection according to claim 34 wherein the sleeve on its end opposite from the annular collar is constructed to be supported directly on the underside of the screw head or on a cylindrical projection.

45.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 44 wherein the diameter of the screw head or the diameter of the cylindrical projection is less than the diameter of the first through opening.

46.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 34, wherein the sleeve in the screwed-in state is deformed in such a way that the sleeve material is pressed into an annular space formed between the screw shank and the second through opening.

47.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 46, wherein the sleeve material is pressed into a gap formed between the screw head and the cylindrical projection and the first through opening.

48.(Previously presented) The screw connection according to claim 46, wherein the sleeve material is pressed into at least one longitudinal groove formed in said first through opening parallel to or essentially parallel to the direction of movement in which the screw is screwed and unscrewed.

49.(Withdrawn) The screw connection according to claim 34, wherein the sleeve has an annular-shaped cross section, and at the end thereof facing toward the screw

head has a section that conically tapers in the direction of the thread.

50.(New) A screw connection for at least two hinge parts, comprising a screw configured for interconnecting the at least two hinge parts, wherein the hinge parts engage one inside the other and have an upper hinge lobe, a lower hinge lobe, and at least one middle hinge lobe, said screw having a screw head and a screw shank that extends through a first through opening in the upper hinge lobe and extends through a second through opening in the middle hinge lobe, with a thread permitting the screw shank to be screwed into the lower hinge lobe, and comprising a sleeve that surrounds the screw shank, has elastic properties, and interacts with the upper and middle hinge lobes when the screw is in a screwed-in state, whereby the diameter of the second through opening is less than or equal to the diameter of the first through opening, and the screw has at least one bearing surface for contacting the sleeve with at least one engaging surface that is aligned in the direction of movement in which the screw is unscrewed, the improvement comprising:

the screw shank having an annular collar that, in the screwed-in state is situated in the middle hinge lobe, said annular collar providing said at least one engaging surface to retain and support said sleeve thereagainst, and wherein the first through opening, having a circumferential surface, is provided with at least one longitudinal groove in said circumferential surface running parallel or essentially parallel to the direction of movement in which the screw is screwed and unscrewed for protecting the sleeve from twisting.

51.(New) A screw connection for at least two hinge parts, comprising a screw configured for interconnecting the at least two hinge parts, wherein the hinge parts engage one inside the other and have an upper hinge lobe, a lower hinge lobe, and at least one middle hinge lobe, said screw having a screw head and a screw shank that extends through a first through opening in the upper hinge lobe and extends through a second through opening in the middle hinge lobe, with a thread permitting the screw

shank to be screwed into the lower hinge lobe, and comprising a sleeve that surrounds the screw shank, has elastic properties, and interacts with the upper and middle hinge lobes when the screw is in a screwed-in state, whereby the diameter of the second through opening is less than or equal to the diameter of the first through opening, and the screw has at least one bearing surface for contacting the sleeve with at least one engaging surface that is aligned in the direction of movement in which the screw is unscrewed, the improvement comprising:

the screw shank having an annular collar that, in the screwed-in state is situated in the middle hinge lobe, said annular collar providing said at least one engaging surface to retain and support said sleeve thereagainst, and wherein the second through opening has an annular cross section and a circumferential wall, and wherein at least a portion of said circumferential wall that faces toward the screw head is conically tapered.